

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 037816

FOLLOWING REPEAT QUITO 1132 ACTION SECSTATE
INFO GUAYAQUIL 18 FEB 77

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 1132

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI MASS EC PE

SUBJ: HIGH LEVEL GOE MISSION TO WASHINGTON

REF: STATE 35888

1. SUMMARY: VADM OLMEDO, CHIEF OF JOINT ARMED FORCES
COMMAND, CONFIRMED TO (EMBOFFS) FEBRUARY 17, THAT
GOE WAS PLANNING TO DISPATCH A HIGH LEVEL MISSION TO
WASHINGTON, HEADED BY FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEFENSE MINISTER
IN ORDER TO DISCUSS ECUADOR'S DEFENSE PROBLEMS IN THE
CONTEXT OF OVERALL RELATIONS WITH U.S. THE EXACT TIMING OF
THE MISSION'S DEPARTURE DEPENDED ON THE AVAILABILITY OF
HIGH-LEVEL U.S. OFFICIALS, BUT THEY HOPED TO TRAVEL SOMETIME
IN MARCH.

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2. ACTING UPON REFTTEL AND LOCAL RUMORS ABOUT FORMATION OF
HIGH LEVEL MISSION TO WASHINGTON IN CONNECTION WITH ECUADOREAN
DEFENSE PROBLEMS, DCM AND (POLCOUNS) CALLED UPON
VADMIRAL RENAN OLMEDO, CHIEF OF JOINT ARMED FORCES COMMAND
AND CNO, ON FEBRUARY 17 TO SOUND HIM OUT.

3. OLMEDO READILY CONFIRMED THE REPORTS, STATING THAT THE

MISSION WAS TO BE COMPOSED OF FOREIGN MINISTER JORGE SALVADOR LARA, DEFENSE MINISTER ANDRES ARRATA, AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF COL. LUIS ABAD, ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL RAUL CABRERA, AND HIMSELF. OLMEDO SAID THAT PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS NOT TO POUND ON TABLES AND COMPLAIN ABOUT THE KFIR REFUSAL. MUCH OF THE INITIAL INDIGNATION ON THE KFIR REFUSAL, HE SAID, HAD GIVEN WAY TO A MORE SOBER EVALUATION OF ECUADOR'S RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND HIS COUNTRY'S AIR DEFENSE PROBLEM VIS-A-VIS PERU. BOTH HAD THE HIGHEST PRIORITIES, AND NO ONE IN GOE HAD DESIRE TO SACRIFICE ONE FOR THE OTHER IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. THE MISSION WOULD BE AIMED AT MAKING THE U.S. AWARE OF THE SERIOUS DEFENSE PROBLEMS THAT ECUADOR PERCEIVED IN ORDER TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A BETTER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING. THE U.S. WAS IN A POSITION TO ASSIST ECUADOR IN ITS DEFENSE PROBLEM AND THE MISSION TO WASHINGTON WAS DESIGNED TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT IT WAS POSSIBLE. HE ADDED THAT IF THE U.S. WAS UNABLE TO PROVIDE ECUADOR WITH THE EQUIPMENT IT NEEDED FOR ITS OWN GOOD REASONS, THE GOE WAS DETERMINED THAT SHOULD NOT BE CAUSE FOR DISRUPTION OF BILATERAL RELATIONS IN OTHER FIELDS. THIS BASIC POLICY, HE DISCLOSED, HAD BEEN LAID DOWN AT A FEBRUARY 15 MEETING OF THE TRIUNVIRATE AND MILITARY HIGH COMMAND.

4. ASKED ABOUT REPORTS OF AN AIR FORCE DELEGATION ON A PLANE-BUYING MISSION, OLMEDO VERIFIED THAT SUCH A MISSION HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AND WOULD BE DISPATCHED TO EUROPE SHORTLY. HE VOLUNTEERED THAT ECUADOR WAS IN THE DESPERATE POSITION OF HAVING TO SEEK OUT ALL POSSIBILITIES ON AIR DEFENSE WHILE HOPING THAT THE MAJOR SHARE COULD BE PROVIDED

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BY THE U.S. HE INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH THE AIR FORCE MISSION WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION, THESE PLANS HAD BEEN SUSPENDED, AND ONLY WESTERN EUROPEAN SOURCES WOULD BE CANVASSED AT THIS TIME. DURING THE FEBRUARY 15 MEETING, HE REVEALED, THERE WAS NEAR UNANIMITY ON STAYING AWAY FROM THE SOVIETS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

5. QUESTIONED ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE WASHINGTON VISIT, OLMEDO INDICATED THAT GOE DOES NOT INTEND TO RUSH OFF BUT WANTED SUFFICIENT TIME TO PREPARE FOR A GOOD PRESENTATION. THEY DESIRED AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE ACCORDING TO HIS CONVENIENCE AND AVAILABILITY, BUT WERE THINKING IN TERMS OF THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH.

6. EMBASSY OFFICIALS CAUTIONED OLMEDO THAT APPOINTMENTS AT THAT LEVEL WERE OFTEN DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN ON THREE WEEKS NOTICE AND THEY DID NOT WISH TO SEE THE GOE DISAPPOINTED BY EXPECTING TOO MUCH. OLMEDO RECOGNIZED THIS, BUT HOPED THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD COOPERATE IN COORDINATING THE SCHEDULE

AS BEST IT COULD.
BLOOMFIELD.
UNQUOTE HARTMAN.

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